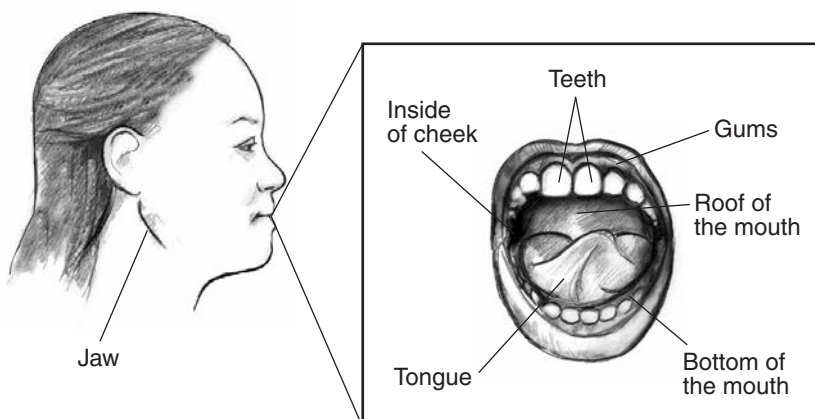


How can diabetes affect my mouth?

Too much **glucose**,* also called sugar, in your blood from diabetes can cause pain, infection, and other problems in your mouth. Your mouth includes

- your teeth
- your gums
- your jaw
- tissues such as your tongue, the roof and bottom of your mouth, and the inside of your cheeks



*See the Pronunciation Guide for tips on how to say the words in **bold** type.

Glucose is present in your **saliva**—the fluid in your mouth that makes it wet. When diabetes is not controlled, high glucose levels in your saliva help harmful bacteria grow. These bacteria combine with food to form a soft, sticky film called **plaque**. Plaque also comes from eating foods that contain sugars or starches. Some types of plaque cause tooth decay or cavities. Other types of plaque cause gum disease and bad breath.

high glucose levels =  plaque

Gum disease can be more severe and take longer to heal if you have diabetes. In turn, having gum disease can make your blood glucose hard to control.